Demand for Indian Coffee

797. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Coffee prices spill over as Ministry, Board bungle" which appeared in 'The Observer of Business and Politics', New Delhi dated the 14th July, 1994;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what are the measures Government propose to ensure that the international demand for Indian coffee, which is going up, is not affected and the cartel of exporters led by Brooke Bond India Limited and Nestle India do not resort to aggressive buying to make a fast buck?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government's attention has been drawn to this newsitem. However, there is no bungling whatsoever on the part of the Coffee Board or the Ministry of Commerce. After introduction of free sale quota for the growers by the end of 1993-94 season alongwith the single auction system for domestic and export market, taking I.C.O. indicator price as reserve price, the international prices of coffee are reflecting on domestic market also. Due to various reasons including reported damage to coffee crop in Brazil, there is a general shortage of coffee in the world market. This has resulted in the coffee prices showing an upward trend in most international auction centres.

(c) The free sale quota has been introduced this year specifically with a view that Indian exporters can establish themselves in international market. There is no cartel of exporters since common open auctions are now conducted by the Coffee Board for exports as well as for domestic buyers.

Export of spices

798. SHRI SARDA MOHANTY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to increase the export of spices;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this direction during the last three years;

(c) the names of the countries to which different kind of spices have been exported during the last three years; and

(d) the year-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government/Spices Board has taken a number of steps for promotion of export of spices. These include:—

(i) Quality evaluation and upgradation to international standards;

(ii) Promotion of export of value added spices in the form of curry powder, spice oil and oleoresins, branded consumer packed spices dehydrated green pepper etc.

(iii) Strengthening the market base in existing markets and identfying new markets;

(iv) Providing assistance for promotion of specific brands by individual exporters in overseas markets;

(v) Popularising logo as a mark of Indianness and quality to spices in consumer packs;

(vi) Sponsoring sales-cum-study delegation, participation in selected international food fairs and organising buyer-seller meets;